Micro Finance Institutions

2985. DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) how many Micro Finance Institutions are operating in the country right now;

(b) how many Self Help Groups have been formed which are linked to Micro Finance Movement in the Country; and

(c) how many families including women are covered and supported under the Micro Finance Credit system; State-wise, region-wise and district-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) are not regulated at present. As such, the Data Reporting System of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) does not generate such data. However, as per the estimates of NABARD, the MFIs of various sizes, functioning as on March 2007, is indicated in the table below:—

MFIs	Number	Client Outreach	Loan portfolio
Large	8	>1 lakh	>Rs. 100 crore
Medium	30(+)	>50K to 1 lakh	Rs. 21 cr. To Rs. 100 cr.
Small	50(+)	>25K to 50K	Rs. 3 cr. To Rs. 20 cr.
Very Small	1000(+)	<25K	<Rs. 3 crore.

(b) Since inception of the Self Help Group (SHG) — Bank linkage programme and up to 31.01.2008, 30,83,811 SHGs have been credit linked aggregating Rs. 20,342.21 crore.

(c) As on 31.03.2007, the SHG — Bank linkage programme has enabled an estimated 409.5 lakh poor households to gain access to micro finance from the formal banking system. Approximately, 90% of the SHGs credit linked to banks under the programme are women SHGs.

The Data Reporting System of RBI and NABARD does not generate such data.

Foreign exchange reserves as securities issued by U.S. treasury

2986. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a part of the foreign exchange reserves in India are held as securities issued by the U.S. Treasury;

(b) if so, the rate of return on such U.S. securities;

(c) whether any part of the Indian forex reserves was held in bonds issued by the Federal National Mortgage Association (FNMA) and Government National Mortgage Association (GNMA) in the U.S.;

(d) if so, the rationale for holding such bonds; and

(e) whether Government has lost any amount owing to the subprime mortgage crises in the U.S.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) India's foreign exchange reserves are invested by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in multi-currency, multi-market portfolio including securities issued by the US Treasury. The main objectives of investment of the country's foreign exchange reserves are safety and liquidity. The rate of earnings on foreign exchange reserves (after accounting for depreciation) was 4.6 per cent in 2006-07.

(c) No Sir. The RBI does not hold such bonds.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The RBI has reported that there were no losses in the management of foreign exchange reserves on account of subprime mortgage crisis in the US.

Funding by ADB

2987. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Transport, Energy and Urban Development will be the core to focus of Asian Development Bank (ADB) in India over the next three years, 2008—2010;

(b) whether the Bank has also plans to fund 250 million dollars in Bihar, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh under the agro-business infrastructure; and

(c) if so, whether ADB has already provided loans in this sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Agri-business Infrastructure Development Project in Bihar and Maharashtra is one of the pipeline projects included in the ADB's Country Strategy and Program for 2008—2010.

(c) Since this project is in the pipeline, the question does not arise.

Durability of Rs. 10 Currency Notes

2988. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is concerned about the short life span of currency notes due to misuse by people for making currency garlands, decorating pandals and places of worship;

(b) whether the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) spends more on printing of Rs. 10 notes than the value of the note; and

(c) what steps are being taken by the RBI to enhance the durability of Rs. 10 note which is in common daily circulation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) The Government and RBI are aware of such practices. The RBI, from time to time, by means of publicity campaigns creates public awareness on handling banknotes.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) RBI has informed that they have issued directive to all the commercial banks to do away with stapling of banknote packets and instead secure note packets with paper bands. Banks are also directed to stop any kind of writing on the watermark of the banknotes.